a very great gift, it is the least understood or appreciated by the public.

"Twenty years ago," says Mr. Ronald, for some unknown reason, the accompanist disliked to be called an accompanist, and was announced five times out of six as 'conductor.' To-day, from some equally mysterious cause, the accompanist is announced on a programme as 'at the piane,' which would be more applicable, surely, to the music stool! However, it matters little really what he be called or how he be 'billed.' The fact remains that the public never properly appreciates his art, which is somewhat hard to account for, considering that he must work just as hard and must be just as gifted as an instrumentalist, a vocalist, a conductor or a composer.

nard and must be just as gifted as an instrumentalist, a vocalist, a conductor or a composer.

"To accompany really well it is necessary to be an excellent pianist, to read at sight as easily as the ordinary individual cap read a novel, to transpose any and everything, to be an all-around good musician and, above all, to possess the indefinable gift of supporting a performer without drywning him, of breathing with the singer, of following the slightest nuance of the instrumentalist! All these things and many others are actually essential to the making of a great accompanist, and, as will be easily imagined, they are not gained without much hard work, study and experience, added to which natural talent is indispensable. Why, then, should an accompanist, having attained these things, be the last person noticed, receive no acknowledgment whatsoever in the shape of public applause, and, as often as not, be passed over in the criticisms of a concert or be summarily dismissed with 'Mr. X. accompanied'?

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to-day.

AI remember Edward Terry in Pinero's comedy 'Sweet Lavender,' having continually to reiterate a phrase that went 'Blame, blame, blame! but praise? Oh dear no!' And surely these words are applicable to the lot of the accompanist. It may be said that I am exaggerating the case and that names such as Hamilton Harty, S. Liddle, F. A. Sewell, Charlton Keith, Harold Craxton and several others are well known alike to artists and the public. But I would point out at once that nearly all these men have made names outside their accompanying—one as a conductor, another as a song writer, another

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who are not actually entertaining them or brought prominently under their notice. Many of my readers must remember that a score of years back the conductor of an orchestra was thought no more of than the accompanist is to-day. Gradually his turn came for proper appreciation and acknowledgment, and then it was that the members of the orchestra were passed over without notice. Sir Henry Wood was one of the first conductors in this country to insist on the entire orchestra sharing the applause with him after any particularly brilliant work. This is as it should be. Every man that is before a public has the right to expect that public to acknowledge his work or condemn it, as they may think fit, but most certainly not to pass it over. I never believe in those superior people who maintain that they scoff at public applause. Every artist loves it in his heart, and it is only the humbug who declares that he cares naught for it.

"Looking down the different branches of the art of music, one finds that the

he cares naught for it.

"Looking down the different branches of the art of music, one finds that the accompanist is the only member of the profession, actively engaged before the public, who is deprived of receiving his applause. A composer can bow his acknowledgment after a first performance of his work if he cares to do so. The vocalist and instrumentalist have often more than they deserve, and, as I have said, even the members of an orchestra come in for their share to-day.

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